

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-8 (Canceled).

Claim 9 (New): A semiconductor substrate cutting method for cutting a semiconductor substrate having a front face formed with a plurality of functional devices into the individual functional devices, so as to manufacture a semiconductor device having the functional device, the method comprising the steps of:

attaching a protective member to the front face of the semiconductor substrate, such that the functional devices are covered;

irradiating the semiconductor substrate with laser light while positioning a light-converging point within the semiconductor substrate with a rear face of the semiconductor substrate acting as a laser light incident face after the step of attaching the protective member, so as to form a modified region, and causing the modified region to form a starting point region for cutting along each line along which the semiconductor substrate should be cut, the lines set like a grid running between the neighboring functional devices, inside by a predetermined distance from the laser light incident face;

attaching an expandable holding member to the rear face of the semiconductor substrate by way of a die bonding resin layer after forming the starting point regions for cutting;

cutting the semiconductor substrate and the die bonding resin layer from the starting point regions for cutting along each of the lines in the grid by expanding the holding member after attaching the holding member, so as to obtain a plurality of semiconductor chips each having a front face formed with the functional device and having a cut piece of the die bonding resin layer in close contact with a rear face thereof; and

mounting the semiconductor chip onto a support body by way of the cut piece of the die bonding resin layer in close contact with the rear face thereof, so as to obtain the semiconductor device.

Claim 10 (New): A semiconductor substrate cutting method according to claim 9, wherein the support body is a lead frame.

Claim 11 (New): A semiconductor substrate cutting method according to claim 9, wherein the holding member is expanded after the protective member is removed from the front face of the semiconductor substrate.